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November 30, 2010

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Mr. Corbin Davis
Clerk of the Court
Michigan Supreme Court
P.O. Box 30052
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Admin File No. 2010-18
Michigan Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1

Dear Mr. Davis,

I write in support of Alternative B of the proposed Michigan Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1. I have provided pro bono legal services to the poor for my entire professional career, and am a longstanding donor to the Access to Justice Fund. My firm has proudly been recognized in the State Bar's Pro Bono Circle of Excellence for many years. I have made pro bono and support of Access to Justice a cornerstone of my work because I am acutely aware of the large unmet need for civil legal services for the poor. While I admire and support the work of our legal services programs in Michigan, they are simply not able to meet the need for legal services because they do not have enough resources.

Alternative B makes it clear that our responsibility as lawyers is to serve the legal needs of the poor in greater proportion to our volunteer work to meet other community needs. It appropriately directs lawyers to those avenues – like the Access to Justice Fund – that have been built in Michigan to serve those needs. Alternative B embodies the beliefs that have motivated my pro bono work and my support of the Access to Justice Fund.

Among my circle of colleagues I have regularly advocated that those who are deficient in their pro bono commitment should step up their efforts. Many of my colleagues who are not involved in pro bono activities want to know where to start. Alternative B allows me to make suggestions of approved activities which may be attractive to members of the bar who have a desire to make a commitment but lack the time and resources to make an intelligent choice about where to start.

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For these reasons, I ask that the Court to adopt Alternative B.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Pitt

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